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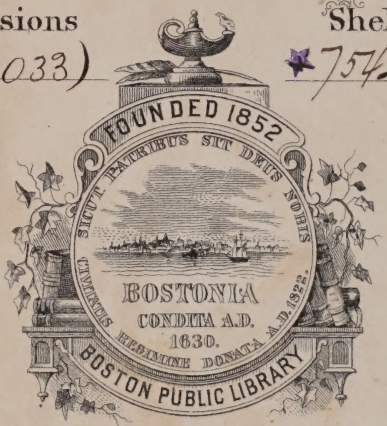

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MR. PEABODY'S SERMON,

AT THE ORDINATION AT

DUNSTABLE, N. H., JUNE 10, 1835.

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CHRIST, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

AT THE ORDINATION

OF

REV. HENRY EMMONS,

OVER THE

FIRST UNITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND PARISH

AT

DUNSTABLE, N. H.

JUNE 10, 1835.

BY ANDREW P. PEABODY,
PASTOR OF THE SOUTH CHURCH AND SOCIETY, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

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DISCOURSE.

2. Corinthians, IV. 4. — *Christ, who is the image of God.*

The view of the character of Christ, which these words suggest, is a favorite and prominent one with the writers of the New Testament. He constantly speaks of himself, and is spoken of by the apostles, as his Father's representative, as a human manifestation of the one indivisible and eternal God. It is in this point of view, that the faithful preacher of the gospel is bound to set his Master forth, and, while he proclaims Christ as the image of God, to exhort and entreat his hearers to renew themselves after the same image. I trust, therefore, that the subject which I have selected, may be deemed and found appropriate to the occasion which has convened us, — the setting apart of a new minister of Jesus, to feed this portion of his flock, — to show to the worshippers in this temple the Father through the Son, — to lead them to honor and love the Father, by placing before them, in living and truthful colors, the moral beauty and grandeur of the Son's character.

"Christ, who is the image of God." This view of the Saviour's character should be understood, prized and felt by all his followers. I shall, therefore, *first*, explain it, *secondly*, illustrate its importance, and *thirdly*, attempt to render it practically useful.

I. I preface my explanation by a remark, which, though many of the wisest and best of our fellow Christians would not allow it, is to my own mind, and, I trust, will be to yours, obvious and just. It is this: — that our text puts an unqualified negative on the doctrine of the Supreme Deity of Christ. An image implies a representation. It belongs to the same class of objects, to which pictures and statues belong. A man cannot be his own picture, statue or likeness. No more can God be his own image. A picture, statue, or image, always denotes something distinct from the person or thing, of which it is a picture, statue or image. Equally must the image of God denote some person or thing distinct from God himself; and, if Christ be the image of God, he must be a being distinct from God.

We now proceed to the inquiry: In what respects is Christ the image of God? — an inquiry, which seems to demand a negative, as well as a positive answer.

Christ cannot be the image of the divine nature. That admits of no representation. It is in its very essence infinite, and a finite image of infinity is a contradiction of terms; for an image must adequately represent the properties of that of which it is an image.

It must, then, be of some portion of God's attributes, not of his nature as a whole, that Christ is the image. But of what attributes? It cannot be of his omnipotence. He, who daily suffered under the abuse of power, cannot be the image of the Lord of all power and

might. He, who died by the hands of weak mortals, cannot be the image of him, in whose hands is the life of every living being in the universe. Christ, indeed, wielded supernatural powers, — the sea obeyed his bidding, — disease fled at his word, — the grave at his command disgorged its prey. But of these miracles, he says: "I can of mine own self do nothing."—"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

Nor can Christ be the image of the divine omniscience. His knowledge, though he could read the hearts of individuals and unfold the destinies of nations, was yet limited. Of the time of the consummation of all things, he says: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, nor even the angels which are in Heaven, nor yet the Son." His instructions, indeed, reach to heaven and through eternity, and bear the impress of divinity. But of these he says: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me."—"The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself."

Nor can Christ be the image of God's eternity. Not though he were before Abraham, — not though he were in glory with the Father before the world began. For at most, he was not uncreated, but, as the apostle terms him, "the first-born of every creature;" and, if a creature, there must have been a past eternity before he began to exist.

Of what portion of the divine attributes is Christ then the image? We answer: He is the image of God's *moral* attributes, — of His justice, holiness and benevolence. Here the image is no less perfect than the original, and reflects the full lustre of its original. In his limited sphere of knowledge and of action Christ is no less just, holy and benevolent, than is his Father throughout the immensity of his creation

As regards physical attributes, the finite cannot bear the image of the infinite. But in moral character the finite may be perfect, and thus reflect the image of the infinite and perfect.

Christ is the image of God's *justice*. He decided not by outward appearance; but searched the heart, and judged of motives, thoughts and purposes. He judged righteous judgment. Favor could not bribe him, fear could not move him from the path of rectitude. He accepted not the persons of the rich or honorable, — he despised not the poverty of the poor or the lowliness of the lowly. He gave to all their due; and taught his followers to render to every one, whether good or bad, whether friend or foe, what justly appertained to him, — to give to Cæsar the things that were his, as well as to God the things that were his. All that he said, all that he did, was in accordance with those perfect laws of rectitude, which are the foundation of God's throne; and the principles of his gospel, if universally adopted, would abolish injustice forever, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Moreover, by the same immutable principles is he to be the righteous judge of those, whom he came to save.— Thus is Christ the image of the divine justice.

He is also the image of the divine *holiness*. Though tempted, he was sinless. Though encompassed by iniquity, it touched not so much as the hem of his garment. An atmosphere of purity surrounds him wherever he goes. Hypocrisy cannot stand the keen rebuke of his eye, while humble virtue rejoices in his smile and his blessing. His prerogative it was, as the only immaculate being that ever trod the earth, to say without limitation or exception: "Be ye followers of me." We discern in him not only uniform purity and sanctity of

word and deed, but that constant reference to moral distinctions, that unquenchable love of virtue and holiness, which we see in all the works, the ways and the revelations of the Almighty. And it is the direct and sole tendency of his precepts, doctrines, promises and example, to inscribe "Holiness to the Lord," on every human heart, and to make holiness of life the constant aim of every human being. Thus is Christ the image of the divine holiness.

He is also the image of the divine *benevolence*. His mission was a mission of mercy. God so loved the world, as to send a Saviour to live and to die for it. And that Saviour came forth as a ray from the sun of divine love, or, rather, as another sun, shining with the same light, diffusing the same benign influence. He was love, — constant, all-enduring, all-conquering love. No unkind word escapes his lips. Good he returns, not for good alone, but for evil. He prays for those who rail at him, blesses those who curse him. His benevolence appears the most striking, when viewed in connexion with his holiness. His pure spirit abhors sin, and shrinks from it with loathing. Yet, through the whole course of his ministry, is he kept constantly in contact with sin and with sinners. And not only so, but he is obliged by the terms of his commission to denounce guilt, and to threaten it with a fearful retribution in the life to come. Yet never does his benevolent spirit beam forth in purer lustre, than when he is rebuking or condemning iniquity. For it is sin, not the sinner, that he hates and loathes. To the sinner, his words are always those of melting sympathy and ardent love. While he firmly and sternly declares spiritual death to be the wages of unrepented sin, he reaches the hand of pitying affection to him, even, whose guilt

has been of the deepest dye, and says to him: "Come unto me, thou weary and heavy laden; take my yoke and my burden upon thee, and I will give thee rest." The whole work which the Father gave him to do, was a work of love; and, when he had faithfully finished that portion of it, which was to be done in active life, he cheerfully addressed himself to that more arduous portion, which was to be wrought on the cross and in the embrace of death.

> "For love of us he bled,
> And all in torture died;
> 'T was love that bowed his fainting head,
> And oped his gushing side.'

And when, having overcome the sharpness of death, he entered into glory, he carried with him to heaven the same love for the frail tenants of earth, that pervaded his soul while here; and we have the assurance that he is still our Mediator and Intercessor, that the eye which once wept for human suffering, still beams with kindness upon us, that we have a high priest, who can be deeply touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Thus is Christ the image of the divine benevolence.

Having thus shown wherein Christ bears the image of God, I proceed, as I proposed,

II. To illustrate the importance of this view of his character.

Under this head, I first remark, that a human manifestation of the Deity was indispensably necessary, in order for man to gain correct ideas of the divine attributes. To show this, let us take a brief survey of the origin and history of man's notions of the Deity. The perfection of humanity constitutes the necessary limit of these notions. As God created us in his image, so must we create a God for our own souls in our own image. We can judge of other spirits only from our

own spirits. We can conceive of no attribute in the Deity, of which we are not ourselves in some degree conscious; for it is by consciousness alone that we have any knowledge of spiritual attributes. Thus, were we ourselves wholly devoid of power, all the stupendous operations of nature would never give us an idea of power. Were we incapable of benevolence, the divine attribute of mercy would be utterly unintelligible to us. Had we no inward principles of justice, to talk to us of the justice of God would be to talk in an unknown tongue. Were we ourselves incapable of moral purity, the divine holiness would be to our minds a name, not an attribute. Were there not something within our own souls, that spurns the narrow bounds of earth, and is ever reaching onward and upward, the ideas of immensity and infinity would never be excited, and thus immensity and infinity, as applied to the divine character, would be mere idle words. If God has attributes of which we are utterly incapable, they are attributes of which we can have no knowledge,—attributes with which no outward manifestation or written revelation could make us acquainted. How, then, without the light of revelation, should we gain our ideas of the supreme Divinity? We should take every attribute of our own souls, which we regard as truly worthy, and suppose it to exist in the divine mind in its full perfection; and this aggregate of all that constitutes the dignity and worth of our own souls would be the fullest and highest conception that we could possibly form of the Deity. And, were our souls what they ought to be, this conception would be high enough and ample enough; for we were created in the image of God, and, had we kept its features stainless and pure, to study God in our own souls would have

been to reproduce the original from the express image. Had Adam remained sinless, he would have needed no revelation to teach him of God. His own unpolluted soul would have mirrored forth the divine attributes, just as the glassy wave reflects ray for ray the beams of the rising sun.

But God's image in Adam was marred by guilt; and has been transmitted to his posterity obscured by ignorance and prejudice, to be yet more obscured by every man's individual follies and sins. Hence the erroneous notions of the Deity, which held almost undisputed sway for ages. Every man fashioned his God after his own image, — clothed the Deity in those attributes, which he most esteemed and loved. Thus there were as many gods, as there were degrees or kinds of moral worth or worthlessness among the worshippers. Thus the temples of Paganism were peopled by gods possessed of every fiend-like attribute, and stained by all that is brutal and loathsome in human character. Thus every nation had its national deities, marked by its national peculiarities whether good or bad. Thus the slave of lust bowed before a licentious deity created after his own likeness. Thus the victim of intemperance bowed before the altar of a god of wine, who was altogether such an one as himself. Thus warlike nations worshipped a god of war, while the hunter's god was, like himself, a hunter. Nor was there any pursuit however mean, any vice however loathsome, any barbarity however horrid, which had not its god, and that god his worshippers. Such deities as these, are the creation of unaided reason, — of that reason, which, it is so often arrogantly asserted, can find out the Almighty to perfection.

Nay, this is not the darkest shade of the picture.

Not only did man, in forming his ideas of God, clothe him in human passions and in human vices; but the case grew worse and worse from age to age. The gods of each generation were a meaner race than those of the preceding generation; for men strove to form themselves after the model of their deities, and, as by this process of imitation they themselves became more depraved, they attributed higher and still higher degrees of depravity to the gods they worshipped.

There was, therefore, no prospect that better ideas of the divine character would ultimately gain the ascendency. For it was morally impossible, that, under the influences then universally prevalent, the human soul should have its faculties so fully and highly developed as to conceive worthily of God. And, in case here and there a single gifted and pure spirit worshipped God in spirit and in truth, he would either have been accused and condemned of Atheism, as Socrates was; or, if suffered to live, would have lived despised by man as a despiser of the gods.

What then did man need? He needed a second Adam, who should bear, like the first, the divine image; but who, unlike the first, should bear it untarnished, and should transmit it, not in the line of natural descent, but of spiritual resemblance. And it was needful too, that the divine image should stand forth in so prominent relief, that it should attract the attention of men while on earth, and that its features should be registered for the instruction of coming generations. But it was above all necessary that this image should be in a human form, — in a subject of human infirmities and wants, and consequently of human sympathy and imitation. And this was all that was needed, — the restoration, in a permanent and imitable human

form, of that divine image, which so soon lost its original purity in Adam, and had never entirely regained it.

This needed communication from God is made in Jesus Christ, not in his gospel, but in him personally. He is his religion. It is a religion, which consists, not in abstract precepts or doctrines, but in the divine lineaments of its Founder's character. To this character attention was drawn and is still drawn by the miracles connected with it, while his humble life of toil and suffering and his death of ignominy keep him within the sphere of human sympathy, and make men feel, that, while tracing the divine image in him, they are tracing it in a fellow man. God places himself before us in a human form, because the various forms of human excellence are the only forms of excellence which we can understand and appreciate.

This manifestation of God in Jesus Christ, wherever it is fully and fairly presented, corrects at once the erroneous ideas of the divine character previously prevalent; for, wherever Christ is brought home to any man's view, there is something so rare and resplendent in his virtues, that he must be forthwith recognized as the perfect model of human excellence, and consequently as the model after which man's ideas of God are to be fashioned. Take, for instance, one of the ancient Germans, who had always deemed martial prowess as the first of virtues, and had worshipped the supreme divinity as the greatest of warriors. When Christ's character is fully and fairly placed before him, he perceives that not a single military trait appertains to it. But yet there is a beauty and grandeur about his whole life, his sacrifice, sufferings and death, which constrains this German to exclaim, as did the Roman centurion, "Surely this man was the Son of God."

He rises from the contemplation of this picture with new ideas of moral excellence, ideas, in which fortitude and self-sacrificing love have taken the place of blood-thirsty valor; and, transferring to the Deity his new ideas of excellence, he thenceforth worships him, not in garments rolled in blood, but in peaceful and benevolent attributes. A similar change takes place in the ideas of moral excellence previously entertained by all men of every religion, when they once become acquainted with the character of Jesus. And a corresponding change takes place forthwith in their notions of the divine character; for every new moral trait, of which man gains knowledge and experience, he carries to the altar, and decks his God with it. Thus the gods of the Pagan world were painted with human appetites, which they were supposed to indulge to scandalous excess. Christ was perfectly pure and temperate; the Christian's God is, therefore, free from all stain of earthly appetite. The Pagan deities were agitated by the fiercest and most malignant of human passions. Pity was the only passion which Christ ever manifested; it is the only emotion therefore which is attributed to the Christian's God. The Pagan deities were the lovers and makers of strife and war. Christ was a peace-maker; the Christian's God is therefore a God of peace. Thus does Christ, by being a perfect pattern of human excellence, become a perfect model for human notions of the Deity. Thus true are his words: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Thus important to *man* is the view of Christ's character which our text suggests. In farther illustration of its importance, I remark that, from this view of Jesus as the image of God, his character derives its dis-

tinguishing *dignity* and *glory*. To be the messenger of divine truth was indeed a high commission; but one which Jesus bore in common with the ancient prophets. To found a new religion, and by means of it to wield a mighty sway over generations yet unborn, was indeed a glorious office; but Moses had the same glory. It was a noble deed, — one upon which angels might well have gazed with admiring wonder, to die for the redemption of mankind; but, had God spoken the word, any other means might have served the same end. But to have the fullness of the Godhead residing in him bodily, — to be able to say with literal truth, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," — to bear about upon earth, to present to human view the image of him, whom mortal eye hath not seen and cannot see, this, this is the prerogative of Jesus of Nazareth, — this is the rank in which he stands unapproached and unapproachable. Yes. The image of God is the name above every name which the Father has given him, — the name above every name which a created being can bear.

The dignity of this office of Christ will farther appear, when we reflect that of all his offices it is the only one which can endure forever. Do we view him as a Teacher? When the knowledge of the Lord pervades earth and heaven alike, there will be no more subjects for his teaching. Do we regard him as a Saviour from sin? When sin is put away, there will be no more candidates for his salvation. Do we look to him as our Intercessor with the Father? When all his saints have reached the world of glory, and stand in the unveiled presence of their God, they will no longer need his intercession. Do we contemplate him as the one appointed Mediator between God and man? When

all his ransomed are gathered into his fold, he must lay down his mediatorial sceptre. But the image of God he may bear forever, and thus be throughout eternity the subject of the gratitude, love and imitation of glorified and happy spirits. The image of God, — Time cannot efface it, — Time cannot mar its features, — Time cannot dim its lustre. The image of God, — though once shrouded in a fleshly and a mortal tabernacle, it appertains only to heaven and to eternity.

This view of Christ's character is still farther important, as casting light upon the mysteries of his written gospel. It shows us why the gospel, as we have it, is just what it is. It must have occurred to those of you, who have thought much on such subjects, that, considering the duration of our Saviour's ministry, those of his discourses which have been transmitted to us are surprizingly few and brief. And of those that we have, many are of local and temporary application, and tend rather to exhibit the character of the Saviour, than to illustrate or prove his doctrines. In fine, the exhibition of Christ himself, rather than of any system of faith or of morals, seems to have been the leading design of the evangelists. The view of his character, which we are now considering, shows us the reasonableness of this design. Had he been merely a Teacher, his person would have been kept in the back-ground, and his words would have filled the record. Had he been nothing more than a Redeemer, it would have been enough to have set forth the terms of redemption through him. But if he were the image of God, then to present that image in full, bright, glowing colors, was the first and paramount duty of the evangelists, and must have been the first dictate of the divine spirit which moved them to their work. If Christ be the

image of God, an infinite value is given to every circumstance, however trivial, which tends to illustrate his character; and we should therefore feel grateful that his words are so often omitted, to make room for the details of his daily life.

This view of Christ's character also removes the reproach of the cross. It has seemed mysterious to many sincere Christians, and has been represented as incredible by skeptics, that God should have sent a pure and holy being into this world to suffer contumely and torture, and to die an ignominious death, for and by human iniquity. And the doctrine of Christ crucified has been made a blasphemous libel upon the justice of the Almighty by the baseless theory, that the punishment due to human transgression was arbitrarily laid upon the innocent Redeemer. But when we view Christ as the image of God, the difficulty vanishes. We see why he should have led a life of poverty and suffering, and died a death of pain and ignominy. Had he lived in ease, affluence and honor, these external distinctions would have dazzled the eyes of beholders, and prevented their discerning and appreciating the real greatness of his character. The divine image would in that case have been like a beautiful picture set in a gaudy frame, the tinsel of which disfigures by its taudry glare the fine teints of the painting. In the gospel picture, the frame has no form nor comeliness, — there is nothing to divert the beholder's eye from the lovely lineaments which it encases. Divine strength is made the most perfect in human weakness. Divine justice appears the most resplendent in him, who suffers the severest forms of injustice. Divine holiness beams with its purest lustre from the midst of temptation and iniquity. Divine goodness puts forth its

mightiest energies, when it triumphs over malice, cruelty and the bitterness of death. It therefore behooved Christ to suffer, not as a Teacher, not as a Saviour, but as the Image of God.

Having thus illustrated, as extensively as time will permit, the importance of the view of Christ's character under consideration, I shall now

III. Briefly present some of its more obvious practical bearings.

It should, first, impress us with a lofty sense of our moral capacities. Christ is the image of God, and we are bidden and encouraged throughout the New Testament to imitate his example, to walk in his steps, to bear his spirit, to have the same mind in us which was in him. Then may we also clothe ourselves with God-like attributes. Then may we obey the Saviour's command: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Then may we comply with St. Paul's exhortation: "Be ye followers of God as dear children." Then may we realize the wish that St. Peter breathed: "That ye might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world." We are thus taught that human nature has not yet attained its limit of moral excellence. It has given us some noble specimens of integrity, purity and benevolence. It has shown us a Washington, whom crowns and kingdoms would not have tempted to utter a lie or to betray a trust. It has shown us a Fenelon, whose pure and lovely spirit seemed, while a tenant of earth, to breathe the very atmosphere of Heaven. It has shown us a Howard, who forsook the bower of ease and the bosom of affluence, that he might carry comfort, health and hope to the receptacles of crime and wretchedness. It has shown us a Paul, a

Peter and a Stephen, who counted not their lives too great a sacrifice for the service of God and the good of their brethren. And had such men as these attained the highest elevation of which our nature is capable, we might well deem it a glorious privilege to belong to the race to which they belonged. But when we compare them with Christ, the image of God, their lustre grows dim, we discern in them frailties and imperfections, and they all want his perfect balance of character, his full and equal developement of every virtue. And his character, not theirs, is the limit of human nature. When we have attained the integrity of Washington, the fervor of Fenelon, the disinterestedness of Howard, the courage of an apostle, the fortitude of a martyr, there is still infinitely more to be attained than we have attained, — there is still a wide distance between us and Jesus, — we may still, though exemplars to our brethren, sit at his feet, and be learners and imitators of him. The perfect image of God in the person of Jesus Christ is the only revealed limit of human attainment, and towards that limit we may be constantly approximating throughout eternity, and yet never fully reach it. What an incentive to the discharge of duty, to the developement of our powers, to the sanctification of our souls!

But this view of the Saviour's character, while it gives us a lofty idea of the capacities of our nature, should prompt, not to pride, but to humility. Christ is the image of God; yet we are commanded to imitate him, and God never commands us to do what we cannot do. We may then make the character of Christ our own. All the divine perfections manifested in his conduct, enshrined in his spirit, we may exhibit in our lives, inscribe on our hearts. Yet how faintly and

imperfectly do we reflect the image of God in Christ! How weak our principles of duty compared with his! How cold our love of God and man compared with his! How often do inordinate desires, vain thoughts, wrong purposes, intrude themselves upon our hearts, while all his desires were holy, all his thoughts pure, all his purposes right! The higher our standard of moral attaintainment, the greater reason have we to humble ourselves for sin. And God, by setting forth his own image in Christ as the pattern and standard of human excellence, has checked pride, excluded boasting, and furnished the most ample ground for humility.

The view of Christ's character, which we have been considering, should also impress us deeply with a sense of our responsibility to him, who enshrined his image in a fleshly tabernacle. He exhibited that image for a short time upon the earth; and then put it into the hearts of four faithful witnesses to transcribe its features, that they might furnish all coming generations with a miniature copy of it. This copy hireling priests locked up for ages in churches and cloisters, giving forth to the world partial and distorted representations of it, alike reproachful to its original and offensive to man. But the Reformers drew forth the true image from its concealment, and presented it in its divine lineaments to their followers. And then they committed it to the newly invented art of printing, by which, as it were, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," were sent forth faithful transcripts to enlighten, emancipate and save the world. These transcripts are now so numerous and so easy of access, that, while the image of God in Christ is the most precious treasure of the rich, the poorest man may enshrine it in his cottage. This image we may have always with us,

when we sit in the house, when we walk by the way, when we lie down and when we rise up. And God has given us this image, that we might become conformed to it in the temper of our minds and the conduct of our lives. He has written under it this inscription: "Where much is given, much will be required." And, my brethren, is it not much, — is it not a priceless privilege, to have in our hands the image of the invisible God, not to survey with a transient glance, but to ponder and to imitate? Oh let it not be in vain for us that God has set his image in his Son. But may we, beholding, as we do, with open face, the glory of the Lord in the person of Jesus Christ, be changed into the same image. God grant that we may bear that image in all the temptations, cares and sorrows of life, that we may bear it on the bed of death, that we may bear it at the judgment seat of Christ, that we may bear it throughout an eternity of improvement, bliss and holiness.

An occasion, like that which has this day convened us, by its publicity and interest, commonly draws together Christians of widely different doctrinal views. We have assembled here not as the members of a sect, but as disciples of Christ, — not to ordain a partizan leader, but a Christian minister. Yet we cannot forget that we are united, not indeed by a written creed, but by a generally similarity of views with regard to christian doctrine. Nor can we forget that these views, (though in our apprehension as old as the gospel, else we would forfeit life rather than preach them,) are to this community and neighborhood of recent date, little known and every where spoken against. To expound what we deem the testimony of the scripture with regard to the Author and Finisher of our faith, seemed therefore

to me an appropriate work for this occasion, — a work of justice to ourselves, — a work of charity to our fellow Christians, whose first question to us would be, "What think ye of Christ?" To this question we have answered, and we would ever answer, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the holy ghost teacheth," that he is the "image of the invisible God," — "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." We term him not God, because the scriptures give him not that title. We speak not of him as a person in the Godhead, because we deem this an unscripturally low representation of his character. The gospel leads us to assign to the Son a much higher rank, and to the Father and the Son a much more intimate union, than the doctrine of the Trinity implies. It presents to us the Father as dwelling in the Son, as speaking and acting through him. It ascribes to Jesus a character in every respect corresponding to the divine character. It places him before us, not as a distinct person from the Father, but as the representative of the Father, — not as a part of the Godhead, but as an authentic and full manifestation of the entire Deity.

But, while I had in view those who might on this occasion inquire concerning our faith and the grounds of it, I had special reference in the choice of my subject to the parties peculiarly interested in the solemnities of this day. The office of counselling the pastor and people with regard to their relative duties is assigned to those, whom mature experience has prepared for it. It is therefore the province of the preacher at such a season to set forth those fundamental doctrines, on which the gospel dispensation is based. The distinguishing feature of the Christian system, namely, a human manifestation of the Deity, God manifest in

flesh, I have now humbly and imperfectly endeavored to exhibit. It is by holding forth to man's view the divine image in Jesus, that the gospel has won its triumphs, and is yet to regenerate the earth. It is thus, and thus alone, that sinners are to be converted to God, and saints sustained and cheered on their heavenward progress. We trust that, in setting apart our brother for the ministry, we are placing over this people one, whose constant effort shall be to hold forth Christ, the image of God, for their grateful love and cheerful imitation. God grant that he may rightly apprehend, that he may faithfully exhibit the loveliness and glory of that image. God grant the people hearts prepared to receive and transcribe it. God grant the pastor and flock a long and happy union here, and an endless union withtheir Saviour and his ransomed in Heaven.

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***No claim can be established because of the failure of any notice, to or from the Library, through the mail.

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